



WEST STOCKBRIDGE

Berkshire County

[NARRATIVE](#)

[GEOGRAPHY](#)

[GOVERNMENT](#)

[DEMOGRAPHICS](#)

[HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS](#)

[TRANSPORTATION](#)

[CULTURE AND RECREATION](#)

[MISCELLANEOUS](#)



NARRATIVE

Narrative

The Town of West Stockbridge is in the western part of Berkshire County, a hilly town with peaks ranging from 500 to 900 feet above sea level. Its principal stream is the Williams River and the valley of the Williams is considered a very beautiful part of the community. The town was owned by the Stockbridge Indians whose leader, the sachem Konkapot, in 1724 sold a huge territory including West Stockbridge and a half dozen more communities to European settlers.

The first colonist was Joseph Bryant from Canaan, Connecticut, who settled his homestead in 1766. There were 40 families in town by 1774 when West Stockbridge was incorporated. The Congregational Church was organized in 1789 and its first building was the first church structure in the town. West Stockbridge men served the French wars in Canada and one of them escaped capture by the Indians only by hiding in a hollow log. The Indian scouts trailing him decided the log was empty when they saw a spider web covering the mouth of the log, and Nathaniel Wilson got away to return home and raise 21 children. David Bradley served in the Revolutionary War for 17 years and came home safe and sound to father 10 children in West Stockbridge. George W. Kniffen, who was born in Rye, New York, also had an interesting life. Having moved to Massachusetts, he was elected to the legislature from Richmond in 1837 and 1848, and after moving again, he was elected to the legislature from West Stockbridge in 1857.

Unlike many of the towns in Colonial days, West Stockbridge did not rely solely on agriculture as the foundation for its economy. Its fortune was under rather than on the surface and a number of quarries began operation very early in the town's history to excavate the fine marble and iron ore that were found in a couple of locations. Much of the marble used to build the State House in Boston, the old City Hall in New York and Girard College in Philadelphia, came from the West Stockbridge quarries. In 1826, the first of the iron mines was opened in the town and eventually thousands of tons of ore were mined. Other industries in the 19th century included a paper mill making manila wrapping paper, machine shop grist mill, iron furnace and lime kilns. In modern times, most industry has vanished and the town hosts a summer resident and visitor population and a mainly residential character.

(Narrative compiled from historical materials)



GEOGRAPHY

Location

Southwestern Massachusetts, bordered by Stockbridge on the east; Great Barrington on the south; Richmond on the north; Alford on the southwest; and Austerlitz, New York, on the west. West Stockbridge is about 13 miles south of Pittsfield; 55 miles west of Springfield; 142 miles west of Boston; 36 miles from Albany, New York; and 100 miles from New York City.

Total Area: 18.64 sq. miles

Land Area: 18.48 sq. miles

Population: 1,483

Density: 80 per sq. mile

Climate

(National Climatic Data Center)

(Great Barrington Station)

Normal temperature in January.....20.1°F

Normal temperature in July.....68.1°F

Normal annual precipitation.....44.8"

U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates

State Line, Stockbridge

Regional Planning Agency

Berkshire County

Metropolitan Statistical Area

(1993 Definition)



GOVERNMENT

Municipal Offices

Main Number: (413) 232-0300

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Form of Government

Board of Selectmen

Administrative Assistant

Open Town Meeting

Year Incorporated

As a town: 1775

Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

	Number	%
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Total Registered 918

Democrats 203 22.1 % Republicans 104 11.3 % Other parties 0 0.0 % Unenrolled Voters 611 66.6 %

Legislators

[Senators and Representatives by City and Town](#)



DEMOGRAPHICS

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic Area: West Stockbridge town, Berkshire County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population.....	1,416	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population.....	1,416	100.0
Male.....	694	49.0	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	12	0.8
Female.....	722	51.0	Mexican.....	2	0.1
Under 5 years.....	57	4.0	Puerto Rican.....	1	0.1
5 to 9 years.....	87	6.1	Cuban.....	-	-
10 to 14 years.....	100	7.1	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	9	0.6
15 to 19 years.....	92	6.5	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	1,404	99.2
20 to 24 years.....	42	3.0	White alone.....	1,380	97.5
25 to 34 years.....	116	8.2	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	235	16.6	Total population.....	1,416	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	292	20.6	In households.....	1,414	99.9
55 to 59 years.....	86	6.1	Householder.....	601	42.4
60 to 64 years.....	70	4.9	Spouse.....	342	24.2
65 to 74 years.....	118	8.3	Child.....	378	26.7
75 to 84 years.....	95	6.7	Own child under 18 years.....	296	20.9
85 years and over.....	26	1.8	Other relatives.....	34	2.4
Median age (years).....	44.3	(X)	Under 18 years.....	8	0.6
18 years and over.....	1,107	78.2	Nonrelatives.....	59	4.2
Male.....	531	37.5	Unmarried partner.....	25	1.8
Female.....	576	40.7	In group quarters.....	2	0.1
21 years and over.....	1,071	75.6	Institutionalized population.....	-	-
62 years and over.....	286	20.2	Noninstitutionalized population.....	2	0.1
65 years and over.....	239	16.9	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male.....	105	7.4	Total households.....	601	100.0
Female.....	134	9.5	Family households (families).....	406	67.6
RACE			With own children under 18 years.....	169	28.1
One race.....	1,408	99.4	Married-couple family.....	342	56.9
White.....	1,389	98.1	With own children under 18 years.....	128	21.3
Black or African American.....	4	0.3	Female householder, no husband present.....	51	8.5
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	1	0.1	With own children under 18 years.....	34	5.7
Asian.....	13	0.9	Nonfamily households.....	195	32.4
Asian Indian.....	2	0.1	Householder living alone.....	162	27.0
Chinese.....	2	0.1	Householder 65 years and over.....	79	13.1
Filipino.....	1	0.1	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	178	29.6
Japanese.....	2	0.1	Households with individuals 65 years and over.....	179	29.8
Korean.....	2	0.1	Average household size.....	2.35	(X)
Vietnamese.....	4	0.3	Average family size.....	2.86	(X)
Other Asian ¹	-	-	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	-	-	Total housing units.....	769	100.0
Native Hawaiian.....	-	-	Occupied housing units.....	601	78.2
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	-	-	Vacant housing units.....	168	21.8
Samoa.....	-	-	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander ²	-	-	occasional use.....	137	17.8
Some other race.....	1	0.1	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	3.1	(X)
Two or more races.....	8	0.6	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	2.8	(X)
<i>Race alone or in combination with one</i>			HOUSING TENURE		
<i>or more other races:³</i>			Occupied housing units.....	601	100.0
White.....	1,397	98.7	Owner-occupied housing units.....	497	82.7
Black or African American.....	5	0.4	Renter-occupied housing units.....	104	17.3
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	3	0.2	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	2.48	(X)
Asian.....	17	1.2	Average household size of renter-occupied units.....	1.74	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	-	-			
Some other race.....	2	0.1			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.



HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Home Sales (Banker & Tradesman) -

[Town Stats - Free market Statistics](#)

Subsidized Housing Units (DHCD 1998)

[DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory](#)

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

Public Housing Units (DHCD 1999)

Conventional State: 0

Conventional Federal: 0

Rental Assistance(DHCD 1999)

State (MRVP: 0

Federal (Section 8): 0



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

West Stockbridge is situated in Berkshire County, a region of hills and low mountains that widen to create the Berkshire Valley in the south. The major cities and towns are linked together by U.S. Route 7. North Adams and Pittsfield are major points of entry for rail freight into Massachusetts, and the region has several commercial airports.

Major Highways

The principal highways are State Route 41 going N-S and the Massachusetts Turnpike (Interstate Route 90) running E-W across the state, with an interchange in West Stockbridge.

Rail

There is no passenger or freight rail service in West Stockbridge, but the network of intermodal facilities serving Massachusetts and New York is easily accessible.

Bus

West Stockbridge is not affiliated with any regional transit authority.

Other

The Great Barrington Airport, a General Aviation (GA) facility, is easily accessible. It has a 2,579'x 50' asphalt runway. Instrument approaches available: Non-precision.



CULTURE AND RECREATION

LIBRARIES

[Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog](#)

(American Association of Museums)

None

MUSEUMS

RECREATION

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Recreational Facilities (Recreational sites and activities)

[Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section](#)



MISCELLANEOUS

HEALTH FACILITIES

(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

Hospitals

None

Long Term Care

None

Hospices

None

Rest Homes

None

UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)

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NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.